

Land Use Plan

The Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan

Planning Commission Draft

The Land Use Plan is one of six chapters of the draft Saint Paul Comprehensive Plan. It was approved by the Planning Commission on _____ and is scheduled for a Public Hearing at the City Council on _____. See <http://www.stpaul.gov/compplan> to view drafts of the other chapters of the plan. Comments and questions about the Land Use Plan can be directed to penelope.simison@ci.stpaul.mn.us.

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Introduction

The Land Use Plan is a complex mechanism for creating a city that is economically strong, environmentally responsible, vibrant, and attractive. Its focus is on fundamental issues of where people will live and where they will work. In an older, core city, growth and continuing revitalization can happen only when existing communities change. Lastly, the plan provides a framework for pursuing revitalization opportunities and responding to challenges facing the city.

Key trends

Increasing population and more diversity. Saint Paul's population grew by 5.5 percent during the 1990s, primarily because of an influx of immigrants. Between 1980 and 2006, the city's foreign-born population more than tripled, with the largest immigrant communities comprised of Hispanics, Somalis, and Hmong. Specifically, approximately 10 percent of residents in 1980 were people of color, whereas by 2006, approximately 40 percent were people of color.

Changing demographics and housing choices. The composition of households is changing markedly. While there are many large, extended families in immigrant communities who desire sizeable single family houses, there are fewer two-parent households with children; there are more couples without children, more singles of all age groups, and more empty nesters. These relative shifts in population are having profound impacts on the types and cost of housing that must be developed in the coming decade and beyond.

Widening disparities. While the metropolitan region has significant assets, ranking high in such factors as college attainment, median household income, home ownership, job growth, and a low poverty rate overall, minorities and the poor are not achieving at the same level or at the same rate as the majority population. These disparities affect the quality of life of individuals and undermine the region's economic stability.

Changing economy to a service sector focus. There is a loss of manufacturing firms and jobs as the production base in the U.S. economy continues to erode. At the same time, the numbers and types of service sector firms and jobs employing "knowledge base" people continues to grow.

Need for an educated and skilled workforce. Labor markets are changing in ways that will result in a shortage of competent workers. Some residents, particularly new immigrants, lack the education and skills needed to fill the jobs that are competitive in the changing economy. In addition, the cost of an education, particularly a college education, is beyond the reach of many people who need it to secure employment. Others need and desire more education and newer skills, particularly people who have been laid off or who are attempting a career change.

Mismatch between jobs and housing. Saint Paul residents must travel longer distances to get to entry-level jobs at suburban firms. They often must rely on public transportation, and the suburbs are not as well served by public transportation as the core cities. Moreover, the jobs most accessible to residents may not be a good match for the skills they have.

Energy costs and climate change. The rising cost of energy is significantly altering choices in housing location, housing type, transportation modes, and travel behavior. This will impact development patterns, affecting the use of transit and the density of new development.

Mind the Gap: Reducing Disparities to Improve Regional Competitiveness in the Twin Cities, prepared by the Brookings Institution and funded by the Itasca Project (2005), charts the gap between the "haves" and "have-nots." The report describes three types of gaps: race disparities, or differences among race and ethnic groups on socio-economic indicators; class disparities, or differences among income groups; and, place disparities, or differences between cities and suburbs, with uneven development that has led to concentrations of poverty in the regional core. The report also describes how the gaps are growing.

Evolving downtown. Downtown, long a center for business and government, has evolved in the last decade, becoming more vibrant as new housing and visitor attractions have been developed. This, combined with more riverfront development, enables Saint Paul to reinvent and redesign downtown to meet the needs of the people who visit, work, and live in it. The momentum will be heightened when construction of light rail transit along the Central Corridor is completed.

Decreasing funds for City services. The City needs to increase its tax base to pay for and to maintain its infrastructure, including parks and recreation centers, libraries, snow removal, police protection, fire fighting, paramedics, sewers, water, and street maintenance. Funding from outside sources has declined significantly, while the cost of providing services and maintaining the City's infrastructure continues to rise. The City must find ways to become more self-sufficient, difficult for a fully built city with limits on its ability to expand the tax base.

Strategies

While strategies in the Land Use Plan are intended to shape the built environment – the buildings that compose Saint Paul's residential, employment, and shopping areas – they are influenced by forces beyond the control of City government. Changes in the economy affect business decisions, housing construction, and the variety and sophistication of retail shops that provide goods and services. The strategies are intended to capitalize on Saint Paul's historic use of its land and contemporaneous economic forces to create a city that is sustainable.

Target growth in unique communities. This strategy focuses on sustaining the character of Saint Paul's existing single family neighborhoods while providing for the growth of mixed use communities. New development in Neighborhood Centers, Corridors, the Central Corridor, and downtown is intended to create communities where housing, employment, shopping, and community amenities, supported by transit, work together to provide for the needs of the people who live and work in them.

Provide land for jobs. For Saint Paul to have a strong economy and to thrive, it must have businesses with living wage jobs. The strategy focuses on providing land for employment centers that capitalize on Saint Paul's historic strengths and emerging labor markets. An important element is reclaiming industrial land for new businesses that can provide living wage jobs.

Promote aesthetics and development standards. As Saint Paul continues to revitalize itself and to grow, it must be an attractive place to live, work, and visit. This strategy provides a framework for design and aesthetics that will engage people and help integrate the built environment into the community.

Strategy 1: Target growth in unique neighborhoods

This strategy establishes a framework for growth by directing new mixed use development to areas of Saint Paul where housing, jobs, amenities and transit can work synergistically, giving neighborhoods strength so they can more successfully serve the needs of the people who live and work in them.

Saint Paul has a long history of strong neighborhoods. They were shaped historically by changes in transportation and the economic situations of their residents, as David Lanegran and Judith Martin describe in their book, *Where We Live*. The city's first residential settlement, Lowertown, was established in 1835 near the Mississippi River, downtown commerce, and jobs. As transportation improved and land values rose, people moved away from downtown. The wealthy settled in the hilly areas and bluffs west and east of downtown, while working class residents lived in the North End and off West Seventh Street and walked to their jobs. The streetcar system opened up additional areas, primarily in the western part of the city, to working-class residents and white collar workers of the emerging middle class. This trend was accelerated as people acquired automobiles. When freeways were constructed after World War II, neighborhoods, suburban in character, were developed. These development patterns produced a variety of communities that, while they look different from each other, function similarly and are the foundation for the continuing growth of Saint Paul.

Framework for growth: areas of stability and areas of change

Policies in this strategy are intended to reinforce the strengths of Saint Paul's existing neighborhoods while, at the same time, building a structure for managing future growth.

Substantial growth is not expected in all neighborhoods. Established Neighborhoods are residential areas of predominately single family housing and adjacent neighborhood serving commercial uses. These are areas of stability where the existing character will be essentially maintained.

Growth is anticipated in other areas of the city, including downtown, the Central Corridor, Neighborhood Centers, Corridors, and Employment Districts. These are areas of change where there will be compact mixed use communities where housing, employment, amenities, and transit work together.

The categories of Saint Paul neighborhoods are depicted on Figures A and B and described on page 6.

Policies in this strategy are intended to steer future growth to downtown, the Central Corridor, Neighborhood Centers, Corridors, and Employment Districts. This growth, reflecting historical growth patterns, will be consistent with policies in the Comprehensive Plan and with City adopted summaries of small area plans and other planning documents.

With the exception of Employment Districts, areas where change is anticipated will have a broad range of housing types. Commercial, civic, and institutional facilities are embedded within them, not isolated in remote, single-use complexes. Architecture and landscaping physically define the streets and public places.

Growth targets

This strategy is intended to enable Saint Paul to meet the 2030 growth targets established for the city by the Metropolitan Council. Compared to 2000 Census figures, the targets include an additional 44,160 people and 20,890 households, and another 36,000 jobs.

Density and achieving targeted growth

The core of the targeted growth strategy is higher density development. Higher density means that new residential, commercial, and industrial development will be at densities greater than currently found in the community. For example, higher density will be townhouses and medium scale flats in neighborhoods now developed with duplexes or small apartment buildings, or larger scale multifamily apartments and condominiums where there is now small scale housing.

Higher density development is not an objective to be sought solely for itself. Higher density development achieves several objectives that contribute to the goal of creating a vibrant, economically strong community that is environmentally sustainable; see Potential Benefits of Higher Density Development on p. 5. These benefits accrue when higher density is used to create a community that is unique when compared to others in the same city or in other cities.

Policies in this strategy direct new, higher density development to downtown, the Central Corridor, Neighborhood Centers, Corridors, and Employment Districts. There will be infill development in Established Neighborhoods and modest amounts of townhouse and small scale multifamily development at the juncture of arterial and collector streets that traverse Established Neighborhoods.

Existing zoning standards, as well as new zoning standards and districts, will be used to support the prevailing character of Established Neighborhoods and to allow higher density development in Neighborhood Centers, Corridors, the Central Corridor, and downtown.

Potential benefits of higher density development

Underlying the targeted growth strategy is the assumption that higher density development, well-designed and integrated into an existing community, will produce tangible benefits for residents, employers and employees, and the municipality in which it is located. This concept, while not a policy in the Land Use chapter, can be used by the City as it considers implementing policies in this plan.

The Urban Land Institute, in *Higher Density Development: Myth and Fact* (2005), describes the benefits of higher density development:

- Multifamily housing is attractive for demographic groups that comprise an increasingly larger part of the Saint Paul's population – married couples without children, many of them empty nesters; single people and other types of households. They are more likely to want to live in an urban community, close to shopping and community amenities and to their workplaces.
- Higher density development, with more residents and more business owners, broadens the city's tax base.
- Infrastructure and public services are used more efficiently. The costs of both are lower because they are spread over more properties.
- Higher density development brings together concentrations of people, so public transit is more feasible by making frequent service needed and desirable.
- Higher density, transit-oriented development often means less traffic congestion because residents make fewer and shorter non-commuting automobile trips, as shopping and amenities are close to their homes.
- Higher density development supports and facilitates economic development because it attracts residents likely to work in emerging labor markets of the knowledge-based economy.

Higher density communities are better able to support commercial retail businesses. Between 1,500 and 2,500 residential units within walking distance of a shopping district are needed to sustain businesses selling basic commodities and services. (*Planning and Urban Design Standards*, American Planning Association). In addition, a trade area population of at least 10,000 residents is needed to support a neighborhood commercial area with a traditional offering of goods and services, particularly in cities with high rates of automobile ownership (*Cities in Full*, Steve Belmont).

Types of Saint Paul neighborhoods

“Neighborhoods” are categories of Saint Paul’s built environment in a hierarchy that includes exclusively residential areas, as well as mixed use communities and employment centers:

Established Neighborhoods. Established Neighborhoods are residential areas with a range of housing types. Single family houses and duplexes predominate, although there may be smaller scale multifamily housing scattered within these neighborhoods. Commercial areas at the juncture of arterial and collector streets provide goods and services for residents of the immediate neighborhood. (See Figure A.)

Neighborhood Centers. Neighborhood Centers are compact, mixed use areas of higher density housing, as well as shopping, community amenities, and employment centers. They are served by public transit. (See Figure B.)

Corridors. Corridors are primary thoroughfares through the city that are served by public transit. They have a mix of uses, including residential, commercial retail and office, and small scale industry. (See Figure B.)

Central Corridor. The Central Corridor is the major transit corridor connecting Saint Paul with the University of Minnesota and downtown Minneapolis. Encompassing University Avenue, the Capitol Area, and downtown Saint Paul, it has the greatest potential for future growth and mixed use development. (See Figure C.)

Downtown. Downtown Saint Paul is the core of the city. Encompassing District 17 and lying solely on the east bank of the Mississippi River, it includes a broad mix of uses, including government facilities, at the highest densities in the city for both residential and commercial office uses.

Employment Districts. Employment districts are areas zoned for industrial and commercial uses where businesses can operate; they are not mixed used districts and residential uses, while permitted, are discouraged. (See Figure G.)

Densities

Density categories	Range of dwelling units per acre
Low density residential	Up to 15
Medium density residential	15 to 30
High density residential	Minimum of 30

1.1 Guide the development of housing in Established Neighborhoods and commercial areas within Established Neighborhoods:

- Residential development up to 10 dwelling units per acre in Established Neighborhoods.
- Residential development of 10-20 dwelling units per acre in commercial areas within Established Neighborhoods.

This policy is intended to provide for the development of housing in Established Neighborhoods and adjacent commercial areas consistent with the prevailing character and overall density of these areas.

Preface to Policies 1.2, 1.3, and 1.4. The range of densities permitted by the existing RM districts is 22 units to 54 units per acre. Several multifamily residential developments constructed in the previous decade far exceed those densities; densities of individual projects ranged between 40 units per acre and 90 units per acre. Similar densities in future residential developments in Neighborhood Centers and Corridors will go far in achieving the objective of compact, mixed use development that supports transit. According to the Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, a minimum of 15 units per acre will support frequent bus service, while a minimum of 50 units per acre will support a walkable community and transit use.

1.2 Permit high density residential development in Neighborhood Centers, Corridors, the Central Corridor, and downtown.

1.3 Study the RM multifamily districts and the TN districts to determine how they can accommodate more intense residential development; the study will focus on density and other development standards, including, but not limited to, height, setbacks, lot coverage, scale, and massing.

1.4 Create new zoning districts to permit higher density residential and commercial development.

The *Central Corridor Development Strategy* estimates the development potential in the corridor; see p. 10. A zoning study to determine zoning districts and development standards to implement the Strategy and the station area plans will serve as a guide for the creation of other zoning classifications and standards, modeled after the *Strategy*, for areas in the city that warrant more intense development than now permitted by the Zoning Code.

Established Neighborhoods

Established Neighborhoods are characterized almost entirely by single family houses and duplexes, as well as scattered small scale multifamily housing. Commercial areas at the intersections of arterial or collector streets provide goods and services for residents of the immediate neighborhood.

1.5 Identify residential areas where single family, duplex housing, and small multifamily housing predominate as Established Neighborhoods; maintain the character of Established Neighborhoods (See Figure A).

1.6 Explore the potential for accessory units in Established Neighborhoods.

Accessory units provide an option for changing demographics, allowing the elderly to age in place while providing more affordable housing opportunities for singles and couples. (See Policy 2.17 of the Housing chapter.)

1.7 Permit neighborhood serving commercial businesses compatible with the character of Established Neighborhoods at the intersection of two streets, either arterials or collectors, located on a transit route and where commercial development currently exists; retail businesses and smaller multifamily housing referenced in Policy 1.8 will be on at least three of the four corners,

1.8 Encourage the development of townhouses and smaller multifamily developments, compatible with the character of Established Neighborhoods, at the intersections of two streets, either arterials or collectors, located on a transit route.

1.9 Devise and implement a neighborhood improvement and maintenance strategy. The strategy, such as *Invest Saint Paul*, will focus primarily on low income neighborhoods. It will be comprehensive in its approach and breadth, focusing on buildings and residents living in designated neighborhoods.

Neighborhood Centers

Growth in Neighborhood Centers provides housing for changing demographic groups; jobs that capitalize on emerging labor markets; and commercial areas with goods and services for people who live and work in them. They use existing infrastructure and services more efficiently and expand the city's tax base. Growth in Neighborhood Centers is achieved through development of a range of housing types at densities that support transit and promote walking. Neighborhood Centers conform to the following characteristics:

Invest Saint Paul, approved by the Housing and Redevelopment Authority in 2007, addresses the impacts from the substantial numbers of vacant and foreclosed properties, primarily housing, on designated neighborhoods:

- Prioritization of vacant buildings for rehabilitation or demolition.
- Rehabilitation of houses, ranging from minor repairs to major improvements.
- Mortgage financing and/or incentives to reduce the number of completed, yet vacant, CDC-owned properties developed with city financing. Also, reduction of foreclosures by working with lenders on a variety of approaches.
- Strategic acquisition of vacant properties to stabilize deteriorating blocks. These properties will be rehabilitated, demolished and held for future development, or converted back to single family use.
- Evaluation of vacant commercial buildings for functional and economic obsolescence.
- Major redevelopment projects, including commercial gateways, commercial sites or nodes, and mixed use developments.

Priority areas, in the Dayton's Bluff, Payne-Phalen, the North End and Thomas Dale (Frogtown) neighborhoods (See Figure D), are those where a concentration of overlapping issues affect both the housing stock and the lives of residents. The program has focused initially on target areas within the priority areas, where the issues can be addressed in a more manageable effort.

- Compact mixed use areas with a range of housing types at high densities, as described in this plan, and at densities identified in zoning studies recommended by this plan.
- Commerce that provides goods and services for residents of the Neighborhood Centers, as well as those from Established Neighborhoods and elsewhere in the city.
- Located on or adjacent to primary travel routes through the city.
- Located on or adjacent to routes in the City's preferred transit network.
- Community facilities, such as parks and recreation centers, libraries, and the public realm.
- Connections by bicycle and pedestrian facilities to adjacent areas and nearby amenities.
- Applicable to proposed Neighborhood Centers located on larger sites, an arrangement of streets and blocks to ensure penetrability and a block size to encourage pedestrian movement.

1.10 Designate as Neighborhood Centers (See Figure B):

Existing Neighborhood Centers:

- Como-Front-Dale
- District del Sol
- East Seventh-Arcade
- Highland Village
- Hillcrest
- Phalen Village
- St. Anthony
- Shepard-Davern
- SunRay-Suburban

Proposed Neighborhood Centers:

- Schmidt Brewery area
- Victoria Park
- West Side Flats

Neighborhood Centers, identified in City adopted summaries of small area plans or other planning documents, evolved as Saint Paul grew through the years. They all have an existing development pattern conducive to supporting a denser, mixed use pedestrian environment where commerce, employment, and amenities can be efficiently and effectively provided. Existing Neighborhood Centers are not all developed at the same level of intensity. Moreover, some existing Neighborhood Centers, such as St. Anthony, are expected to have modest growth, while growth in others, such as Highland Village, is expected to be greater.

1.11 Balance the following objectives for Neighborhood Centers through the density and scale of development: accommodating growth, supporting transit use and walking, providing a range of housing types, providing housing at densities that support transit, and providing open space and recreational opportunities. There can be gradations of density within individual Neighborhood Centers, with denser developments at the core and less dense developments at the periphery.

1.12 Establish boundaries for Neighborhood Centers that reflect existing development patterns and functional characteristics of the area; use these boundaries to guide development activity, monitor growth and other development conditions, and evaluate performance toward meeting objectives for services and community amenities.

1.13 Plan for growth in Neighborhood Centers that recognizes community circumstances and preferences as stated in City adopted summaries of small area plans and City adopted summaries of district plans while still providing additional housing opportunities at densities that support transit and walking.

1.14 Promote Neighborhood Centers as compact, mixed use communities that provide services and employment close to residences.

Mixed use development combines three or more uses – residential, retail, office, recreation or other functions – into an integrated, pedestrian oriented real estate project that is served by transit. Whether the components of the project are within a building or in buildings that are in close proximity to each other, they are functionally integrated so that use of space is maximized. Some of the benefits of mixed use are activating urban areas during more hours of the day, increasing housing options, reducing auto dependence, and creating a sense of place.

1.15 Permit residential development at densities contemplated in Policies 1.2 and 1.3.

1.16 Promote a place, amenity, or activity that serves as a community focus and emphasizes the special identity of individual Neighborhood Centers.

1.17 Provide connections for bicycles and pedestrians to community facilities and activities that support the residential population; examples are parks, recreation centers and libraries; provide connections to adjacent areas of the city. (Both the Transportation and Parks chapters include policies for bicycle and pedestrian connections.)

1.18 Promote conditions that support those who live and work in Neighborhood Centers, including frequent transit service, vibrant business districts, a range of housing choices, and community amenities.

Corridors

Growth along Corridors provides housing for changing demographic groups; jobs that capitalize on emerging labor markets; and commercial areas with goods and services for people who live and work along them. They use existing infrastructure and services more efficiently and expand the city's tax base. Growth along Corridors is achieved through development of housing and employment centers at a scale and intensity that support transit. Corridors conform to the following characteristics:

- Arterial and collector streets.
- Primary thoroughfares into and through Neighborhood Centers, as well as connections between neighborhoods.
- A route in the City's preferred transit network.
- A mixture of residential and commercial uses. Predominately residential corridors will have smaller scale commercial uses, while predominately commercial corridors will have housing interspersed with office uses and retail.
- Development at high densities to support transit.

1.19 Designate as Corridors those areas on Figure B:

Corridors are arterial or collector streets with high volumes of vehicular traffic and frequent peak hour transit service. The existing development pattern along Corridors, where supported by zoning districts that permit more intense development, has the potential to support additional multifamily residential development and employment centers.

1.20 Balance the following objectives for Corridors through the density and scale of development: accommodating growth, supporting transit use and walking, providing a range of housing types, and providing housing at densities that support transit.

1.21 Establish boundaries for Corridors to guide development activity, monitor growth and other development conditions, and evaluate performance toward meeting objectives for providing services.

1.22 Guide development along Corridors that recognizes community circumstances and preferences as stated in City adopted summaries of small area plans and City adopted summaries of district plans while still providing additional housing opportunities at densities that support transit.

1.23 Support a mix of uses on Corridors. Predominately residential corridors will have smaller scale commercial uses, while predominately commercial corridors will have housing interspersed with commercial office uses and retail goods and services.

1.24 Promote the development of more intensive housing on Corridors where supported by zoning that permits mixed use and multifamily residential development.

1.25 Permit residential development at densities contemplated in Policies 1.2 and 1.3.

1.26 Provide connections by bicycle and pedestrian facilities to adjacent areas.

1.27 Promote conditions that support those who live and work along Corridors, including frequent transit service, vibrant business districts, and a range of housing choices.

Central Corridor

The Central Corridor is Saint Paul's major transit corridor, connecting Saint Paul with the University of Minnesota and downtown Minneapolis. Within the city, the Central Corridor encompasses University Avenue, the Capitol Area and downtown Saint Paul (See Figure C). The *Central Corridor Development Strategy* estimates the development potential for the area within the line of change:

- Rental residential units: 9,100 – 11,250;
- Ownership residential units: 2,175 – 3,450;
- Office – 5,750,000 sq. ft.;
- Commercial retail – 1,010,000 – 1,060,000 sq. ft.; and
- Hotel rooms – 1,000.

There was no estimate on the change in industrial uses.

1.28 Implement the *Central Corridor Development Strategy* and individual transit station area plans as the vision for development in the corridor in connection with the construction of light rail transit.

Downtown Saint Paul

Downtown encompasses District 17, which includes the downtown central business district and the Capitol campus; it lies solely on the east bank of the Mississippi River. Downtown is distinguished from the rest of Saint Paul by its intensity of development. It has a concentration of employment and housing, complemented by retail, entertainment, and community facilities.

The *Central Corridor Development Strategy*, adopted by the City Council in 2007, describes the vision and a set of strategies for how the corridor should grow and change in response to the investment in light rail transit. Six principles in the strategy, guiding the preparation of plans for each of the transit station areas:

- Reposition Saint Paul in the region.
- Benefit and strengthen the diverse community along the corridor.
- Link and foster economic activity.
- Improve people's mobility throughout their community.
- Improve the image and quality of life along the corridor.
- Collaborate from design to operation.

Transit station areas identified in the *Central Corridor Development Strategy* are at Capitol East, Dale, Fairview, Lexington, Rice, Snelling, Westgate, Union Depot, 10th Street, and 4th Street/Cedar. Future transit stations are planned at Hamline, Western, and Victoria.

The *Saint Paul Downtown Development Strategy*, adopted in 2003, builds on the template in the *Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework* with policies that support the creation of a complex urban center. The themes in the Strategy are:

- A creative winter city for the 21st Century, where people can interact throughout the year.
- Building on downtown's strengths and assets; specifically, an array of historic structures, green spaces and parks, proximity to the Mississippi River and cultural amenities.
- Livability, including cultivating features of downtown that make it a desirable place to live.
- A balance of land use, mixing residential, employment and entertainment to create a vibrant downtown.
- A connected, pedestrian-oriented downtown, enabling residents, employees and visitors to interact with downtown places and activities.

The vision of Saint Paul as a complex urban center integrated with the river is embodied in the *Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework*. Exemplifying the concepts of New Urbanism, downtown is characterized by mixed use urban villages around the office core, anchored by a park or central green; culture, entertainment, and a regional park; the Capitol and government office buildings along the northern edge of downtown; and access to regional transportation systems, including two interstate highways and transit.

The most important component necessary to achieve the vision in the *Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework* and the policies in the *Saint Paul Downtown Development Strategy* is greater numbers of people working, living and visiting downtown. More people, both during the day and evening hours, will strengthen the existing downtown population base, a mix of residences, employment and visitor attractions. A stronger downtown population base will, in turn, support initiatives to widen the mix of uses, including new commercial retail.

1.29 Implement the *Saint Paul Downtown Development Strategy*.

1.30 Promote a broad mix of uses downtown, which lies solely on the east bank of the Mississippi River, to include commercial office, government, housing, and visitor attractions, so as to attract greater numbers of people to downtown.

1.31 Designate urban villages in downtown Saint Paul, as identified in the *Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework* (See Figure E):

Established urban villages

- a. Fitzgerald Park
- b. Lowertown
- c. Rice Park
- d. Wacouta Commons

Proposed urban villages

- a. Kellogg Mall
- b. Lower Landing

Urban villages surrounding the office core, identified in the *Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework*, are designed and developed to conform to New Urbanism principles of traditional neighborhood development. "Emerging" urban villages identified in the *Framework* have since become "established."

1.32 Promote the growth and diversity of housing opportunities in downtown's urban villages at a level sufficiently high to increase the residential population so that a broad mix of commercial retail can be developed and sustained.

1.33 Strengthen neighborhood connections to downtown Saint Paul through development and improvements that support and complement downtown businesses and urban villages.

Neighborhood connections include Seven Corners, Cathedral Hill, Lafayette Park, District del Sol, Dayton's Bluff, and Railroad Island.

1.34 Promote and add entertainment and cultural activities, and visitor accommodations to support them.

Minnesota State Capitol area

The Capitol, designed by noted architect Cass Gilbert, rises on a promontory north of the downtown office core. The Capitol, state office buildings, and adjacent commercial and residential neighborhoods (East Frogtown, Capitol Heights, the Sears block and Fitzgerald Park) are within the jurisdiction of the Capitol Area Architectural and Planning Board (See Figure F). The Capitol area is exempt from City zoning regulations. Though the Capitol Area is separated from downtown Saint Paul by an interstate highway, it is an anchor for reinvestment in the surrounding areas. Construction of light rail transit through the Capitol Area will be a catalyst for revitalization. Capitol East is one of the transit station areas in the Central Corridor. (See Policy 2.10 on the location of government offices in the city.)

1.35 Encourage the State of Minnesota to design new office buildings to connect functionally and aesthetically with adjacent streets and neighborhoods, affecting elements of site design, building design and orientation, landscaping, and streetscape.

1.36 Encourage the redevelopment of surface parking lots within the Capitol Area.

Redevelopment would accomplish several objectives, including management of surface water, more productive use of the land, and creating connections between the Capitol Area and surrounding neighborhoods.

1.37 Encourage the State of Minnesota to locate its departments and agencies within the City of Saint Paul, particularly the downtown office core.

1.38 Encourage state office leasing on select sites in downtown that help link the Capitol with downtown or that intermix state and downtown office buildings.

Employment Districts

Employment Districts (See Figure G) include:

1. I1, I2 and IR districts. A wide range of limited production and processing functions, as well as general industrial uses, are permitted.
2. B4 and B5 districts in downtown. The full range of commercial uses, with commercial office and health care the predominate employment activities, are permitted.
3. B2, B3, and TN districts on arterial streets. The Zoning Code permits offices and limited production and processing in these districts. Arterials are particularly suited to firms producing small scale products which do not require heavy trucks for deliveries and shipping. Parcels on some arterial streets are sufficiently large, or can be enlarged, to accommodate these types of businesses.
4. Land within the Central Corridor identified for employment uses.

Policies for Employment Districts are included in Strategy 2: Provide Land for Jobs.

General land use policy

The Land Use chapter includes six categories on the generalized future land use map (See Figure A):

- Established Neighborhood
- Significant Mixed Use Areas
- Major Parks
- Major Institutional
- Industrial
- Water

Residential development

These policies address overarching issues described in the Housing chapter.

1.39 Promote the development of housing that provides choices for people of all ages, including singles and young couples, families, empty-nesters and seniors.

1.40 Promote the development of a range of housing types and housing values in each of the 17 planning districts.

1.41 Promote the development of housing in mixed use neighborhoods that supports walking and the use of public transportation.

1.42 Explore the use of planning and development tools to increase the production of housing, including, but not limited to, accessory units in existing neighborhoods, density bonuses for affordable units and parking reductions.

1.43 Establish a working group of representatives from City departments that will meet periodically to review and analyze how those departments can facilitate the development process so the City can be competitive in securing projects that further its growth targets.

Commerce

The City supports traditional urban form and scale in compact commercial areas while, at the same time, recognizes some existing commercial areas, attracting regional patrons as well as local customers, are more oriented to the automobile. An on-going evaluation of the effectiveness of both types of commercial areas to provide necessary and desirable goods and services is essential if they are to be an integral and productive part of Saint Paul's economy.

1.44 Maintain and enhance retail commercial areas throughout the city by promoting standards that make them vital and attractive:

- a. access to a broad range of goods and services;
- b. an anchor for surrounding residential neighborhoods;
- c. safety for pedestrians; and
- d. architectural elements that add interest at the street level.

1.45 Encourage the expansion of compact commercial areas in Neighborhood Centers and Corridors to further the objectives of both categories of neighborhoods.

A variety of retail establishments located in close proximity to each other strengthens a commercial area and creates a synergy that benefits all businesses. This synergy has the potential to encourage business creation and expansion.

1.46 Ensure that streets in compact commercial areas conform to the following criteria:

- a. use of traditional urban building form;
- b. streetscape amenities; and
- c. traffic calming measures.

Traditional urban building form and streetscape amenities should reflect the function of the street and the type of development on it by identifying and promoting the street as the center of a shopping district, no matter how large or small. Streetscape amenities should enhance the visibility of the storefronts or other buildings in the commercial area. (See Policy 1.1 in the Transportation chapter.) Implementing the policy entails preparation of a study of the capital and maintenance costs of streetscape and landscaping improvements and how those costs will be borne.

1.47 Support compatible mixed use within single buildings and in separate buildings in close proximity.

1.48 Continue to promote principles of traditional urban form in the design of new or renovated commercial buildings.

1.49 Facilitate the redevelopment of commercial areas where existing buildings are no longer considered functional to accommodate viable retail and businesses.

Many older commercial buildings are functionally obsolete and cannot be readily adapted to the requirements of modern commercial retail and office establishments. Programs to redevelop these properties or otherwise rehabilitate existing buildings have the potential to strengthen commercial areas in which they are located.

1.50 Prepare a study of commercial zoning districts citywide to determine the amount of commercial zoning best able to provide goods and services for residents, employment districts, and visitors in various areas of the city, as well as to be integral parts of the city's economy; recommend changes to the zoning districts based on the study.

Given market conditions during the first decade of the 21st Century, there is arguably more commercial zoning in some areas than can be materialized into successful retail shopping areas. In other areas, commercial districts may be smaller than market conditions can support. The intent of the study is to determine if the size of commercial districts should be reduced or enlarged to make them more economically viable.

1.51 Prioritize the development of compact commercial areas, accessible by pedestrians and transit users, over commercial areas more readily accessed by automobile. Discourage new and expanded auto-oriented uses.

1.52 Encourage changes to the design of existing auto-oriented commercial buildings and areas with elements of traditional urban form to minimize impacts on the pedestrian realm.

Opportunity sites

1.53 Identify opportunity sites for future development consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, either as mixed use development or as employment centers, including, but not limited to (See Figure B):

- a. Arlington/Jackson West
- b. Case/Hazel warehouse site
- c. Cemstone
- d. Diamond Products site
- e. Ford site
- f. Hamm Brewery
- g. Harriet Island
- h. Island Station
- i. Loeb Lake
- j. Minnehaha/Milton site
- k. Schmidt Brewery area
- l. 3M site
- m. Wilder Foundation site
- n. West Side Flats

Educational institutions

Saint Paul is fortunate to have a wealth of educational facilities. (See Figure H) They bring a breadth of opportunities for Saint Paul and its residents, as well as for those who work in the city. Moreover, they often provide an identity for specific areas of the city.

1.54 Collaborate with public and private schools elementary and secondary schools in conjunction with construction or major remodeling.

1.55 Collaborate with the Saint Paul Public Schools to determine criteria for reuse of school district buildings if they will no longer be used for educational purposes.

1.56 Encourage communication between educational institutions and residents of the community when those institutions seek to expand or make significant changes to their campuses.

Colleges and universities are permitted uses in residential districts and the Zoning Code includes standards for approval of a permit when an educational institution seeks to expand its campus boundary. It is in the best interests of the institution and the community if there is a dialogue between all parties to address potential conflict over a proposed expansion.

1.57 Collaborate with school organizations to promote neighborhood improvement in conjunction with school construction or major remodeling.

Strategy 2: Provide land for jobs

Cities can be the fulcrum for regional economic prosperity. When the assets of urban centers are utilized creatively and with energy, they are catalysts for investment in industries and, thus, jobs for residents.

Cities inherently have much to offer, however. For many decades they were centers for economic and political activity, for culture and education, with quintessential neighborhoods where men and women who worked in the city lived and raised their families. Although much economic activity has shifted to the suburbs and to other countries, the basic elements that made cities successful for so long are still in place: mature physical infrastructure; universities and vocational training schools; institutions and cultural amenities that provide ideas; and important economic centers, such as medical facilities and financial institutions.

Saint Paul during the past 20 years pulled together an array of strategies and projects intended to address the loss of manufacturing jobs. The focus has been reclaiming vacant and underutilized industrial lands and making them productive once again. Elements central to this effort included brownfield cleanup, redevelopment and workforce development.

Now, early in the 21st Century, factors are converging that compel Saint Paul and its partners to hone these strategies and to supplement them, so that revitalization can continue to provide for job-rich industries. Globalization of many industries has intensified. Technologies have become increasingly more sophisticated. The land likely to be developed with job-rich industries may often be found in smaller parcels throughout the city rather than in large swaths of land in railroad corridors. Changing demographics are producing shifts in the labor market. Immigration is giving Saint Paul a new pool of potential employees, energetic and hard working but sometimes lacking skills needed for jobs that are available, at the same time that baby boomers, though close to retirement age, are continuing to work, sometimes at part time jobs.

Development guidelines

There are core guidelines that establish a foundation for the formation and maintenance of employment centers.

2.1 Ensure the availability of sufficient quantities of land suitable for existing and new employment centers; prepare an inventory of properties zoned for industrial and commercial uses that have the potential for redevelopment as employment centers.

An inventory of vacant and underutilized buildings and land currently zoned for industrial and commercial use will provide the City and its development partners with baseline information necessary to pursue a program to develop employment centers.

2.2 Promote the redevelopment of outmoded and non-productive sites and buildings so they can sustain existing industries and attract emerging industries to Saint Paul; focus on issues that include, but are not limited to, energy efficiency, water conservation, and broadband capability.

2.3 Attract industries that use best management practices regarding environmental issues, including air and water quality, soil contamination, solid waste, and sustainable construction practices, in their site development and operations.

Job-rich employment centers at strategic locations

Saint Paul's employment districts historically have been located either in downtown office buildings or within railroad corridors running through the city. Location, land availability, and transportation contributed to this pattern, which has continued with new employment centers developed since the late 1980s and early 1990s and is expected to continue into the future. The shift to an information-based economy, producing more service-sector employment and small scale manufacturing, presents opportunities for redevelopment on all types of sites, including smaller sites and those on arterial streets. (See Figure G.)

Strategic location: citywide

2.4 Focus the growth of employment centers in downtown, the Central Corridor, industrial corridors, and on larger tracts of land, where there is infrastructure capacity and where redevelopment as employment centers, or as mixed use development that includes employment centers, could occur.

2.5 Encourage the redevelopment of sites on arterial streets zoned for B2, B3, and TN2 uses as employment centers. To that end, facilitate redevelopment through a program of assembling parcels to create sites sufficiently large to accommodate smaller scale industrial and office uses.

2.6 Prepare a zoning study to determine how alleys can be used to serve small scale industrial firms and commercial office buildings when they abut residential neighborhoods; issues will include, but not be limited to, access, curb cuts on adjacent streets, loading areas, and buffers for residential uses.

Large scale truck delivery and shipping is often not a requirement for small scale industrial firms and commercial office buildings.

2.7 Develop opportunity sites consistent with the Comprehensive Plan with mixed use development that incorporates employment centers. (Opportunity sites listed in Policy 1.53.)

2.8 Work with health care institutions to assess proposed development projects, including expansion of facilities beyond their existing campuses.

Strategic location: downtown

2.9 Support the retention of the categories of employment that historically have strengthened the downtown office market and produced a stable employment base.

Downtown's central location maximizes access to a large employment base, which is attractive for businesses needing specialized labor.

2.10 Encourage the State of Minnesota, Ramsey County, the federal government, and other governmental agencies to locate in downtown, whether in leased space or in an owner-occupied building. A second priority is to locate in other city locations well-connected to downtown.

Government employment has long been a mainstay of downtown Saint Paul. These agencies will benefit if they are located in close proximity to each other, taking advantage of office space available in multi-tenant buildings. (See also Minnesota State Capitol Area, Policies 1.35 through 1.38.)

Downtown continues to evolve. It once filled the role of a classic urban city, with office buildings and a bustling retail area, and then experienced several years when office vacancies rose and the retail sector shrank. A multi-faceted revitalization that began in the early 1990s includes, in part, cultural and entertainment amenities and residential development. Still, downtown remains an employment center that caters largely to distinct categories of users – state agencies, corporations housed in single-user buildings, and the health care industry. Small businesses, including retail stores catering largely to office employees, are found throughout downtown. The downtown employment base can be strengthened with the retention of these sectors and the addition of businesses that serve or depend on these core businesses.

2.11 Cultivate the development of Class A office space in downtown.

Arguably the most successful segment of the downtown office market is Class A space, particularly those buildings with relatively large floor plates owned and used by a single occupant. The average vacancy rate for Class A space in the decade between 1996 and 2006 was 10.8 percent, almost half of the average vacancy rate for Class B office space.

2.12 Collaborate with the City's partners, including the Greater St. Paul Building Owners & Managers Association, Capital City Partnership, and the Saint Paul Area Chamber of Commerce, to develop strategies to ensure that space in multiple tenant buildings in downtown is occupied; most multiple tenant buildings are Class B office space.

2.13 Prepare a study of Class C office buildings to determine potential uses. The study will focus on how the buildings can be used to respond to issues raised and objectives outlined in the Downtown Saint Paul Office Space Action Plan (2006) and subsequent reports and will incorporate strategies included in the City's Economic Development Strategy; it will also focus on non-office uses, such as housing.

Strategic location: Central Corridor

2.14 Promote the development of employment opportunities in the Central Corridor, consistent with the Central Corridor Development Strategy.

Construction of light rail transit and the Central Corridor's strategic location in the region will enhance the potential for employment opportunities. The scale of investment anticipated in the Central Corridor will produce employment opportunities for residents and non-residents.

Strategic location: Corridors

2.15 Redevelop underutilized or vacant land in railroad corridors.

There has been significant redevelopment in the Phalen Corridor and the Great Northern Corridor in the last two decades. Ample acreage is available for light industry and commercial office development, or to be used to capitalize on the growth of freight rail.

2.16 Prepare a study of the West Midway industrial area outside the line of change as identified in the Central Corridor Development Strategy to determine how the industrial area may be best used to strengthen Saint Paul's industrial sector and employment base. Figure I depicts the West Midway study area.

The West Midway, one of Saint Paul's historic railroad corridors, is strategically located, with much of its current business activity closely tied to the railroad lines that run through it. Many existing businesses, though successful, do not employ large numbers of people. The study, in part, will focus on how the West Midway can evolve to capture "knowledge-based" business activity and to take advantage of the potential for a jobs/housing match because of its proximity to the Central Corridor.

Land assembly

Light industrial and commercial office complexes often require significant parcels of land, or parcels reconfigured to meet the requirements of modern business. Much land that might otherwise be appropriate for redevelopment as employment centers is on relatively small or oddly shaped parcels. Creating parcels large enough for an employment complex will require land assembly. The Minnesota Legislature in 2006 significantly limited eminent domain as a tool for assembling parcels for redevelopment except for the construction of public facilities. Consequently, government

must use other tools, specifically negotiation with property owners, to assemble sites and, if needed, to clean up contaminated land.

2.17 Utilize appropriate financial tools to assemble parcels to be redeveloped for industrial and intense commercial uses.

2.18 Analyze the feasibility of using the City's land assembly bond program to acquire parcels for light industrial and business development as those parcels become available.

Using the land assembly bond program depends on the strength of the market to support the sale of projects so the bonds can be repaid. The program should be used with this caveat in mind.

2.19 Seek a revision to state legislation that limits the use of eminent domain as a tool for redevelopment.

2.20 Seek clarification from the Minnesota Legislature on the language of Minnesota Statutes 242 and 469 to improve the process of transferring tax forfeit properties between Ramsey County and the City/Housing and Redevelopment Authority.

Currently the City and the Housing Redevelopment Authority have the right of first refusal on all tax forfeit properties either for public use or for redevelopment purposes. Changes in state legislation are needed to define more clearly the issues resulting from varying interpretations of the statutes that affect both the process and transfer issues; the objective is to streamline the process so it is more effective and efficient.

Regulation

The Zoning Code is both strategic and flexible in its approach to how land in industrial districts is used. It permits a wide variety of manufacturing and other industrial uses. Contrary to the stated intentions of industrial districts, many non-industrial uses are also permitted. Practically, industrial districts have been designed to accommodate businesses and facilities that might not be welcome in other areas of the city. There are concerns that industrial land will be developed with non-industrial uses, which often produce a higher rate of return than industrial uses on an investment. In response, many cities prohibit residential uses in industrial areas; others do not prohibit non-industrial uses but limit their size and number and require that they be subject to discretionary review. The policies in this section are intended to facilitate the stability of Saint Paul's industrial and employment base.

2.21 Prepare regulations for conditional use review of specified uses, to be identified in a study of principal uses permitted in industrial districts, for the purposes of ensuring compatibility of non-industrial uses with the primary industrial function of the district and of protecting the employment base.

Some non-industrial uses are compatible with industrial uses, while other permitted uses may weaken the industrial character of the district and its employment base. The study is intended to determine how conditional use review for specified uses will be used to protect the industrial character of these districts. It will address the following issues:

- a. Maintenance of the city's industrial employment base.
- b. Benefits to existing and future industrial uses.
- c. Significant adverse impacts on nearby industrial uses.
- d. Significant alterations to the overall industrial character of the area, based on the existing proportion of industrial and non-industrial uses and on the effects of incremental change.

Saint Paul's location as a transportation, manufacturing, and distribution center for the northwestern United States for more than 100 years, and the downsizing of many of these businesses, has left the city with a large amount of contaminated property. Since the 1980s approximately 1,000 acres of brownfields have been investigated, cleaned up, and redeveloped by the City and the Port Authority for light industrial, commercial, and residential uses. This effort has resulted in approximately 4,000 jobs at firms operating on redeveloped brownfields and a significant property tax base increase. Remediation and redevelopment of brownfields in Saint Paul is far from done. Local, state, and federal programs to remediate brownfields, developed during the last 20 years have been effective, but they are also complex and under-funded. Public financial and programmatic assistance is necessary to overcome the extra cost and perception problems associated with the remediation and reuse of brownfields.

2.22 Revise the list of principal uses permitted in industrial districts to ensure compatibility with the primary industrial function of the district for the purpose of protecting the employment base.

The Zoning Code permits a wide range of non-industrial uses in industrial districts. Non-industrial uses undermine the viability of the industrial sector and the city's employment base. The study will determine how the list of principal uses can be revised to strengthen the industrial sector.

2.23 Establish site plan standards for the I1, I2, and I3 districts for the purposes of providing for the efficient use of land and enhancing the aesthetic quality of the district.

TN development standards incorporated into the IR district enhance the appearance and functionality of an industrial development so the district is compatible with nearby commercial and residential areas. Efficient use of a parcel will yield greater numbers of jobs for each acre of development.

Brownfields remediation

Brownfields are abandoned, idled, or under-utilized industrial and commercial properties which, because of actual or suspected environmental contamination, should be remediated before they can be redeveloped. Industrial buildings and property, rail yards, petroleum tank farms, old dumps, as well as dry cleaning, printing, and painting establishments, often become brownfields. Because of the cost of cleanup, many brownfields remain undeveloped. Redevelopment of a brownfields site is more expensive than development on uncontaminated property because of the investigation and cleanup obligation.

The social and economic vitality of a city, especially employment opportunities for its residents, is adversely affected if underdeveloped or vacant properties are not redeveloped, while the redevelopment of brownfields restores and enhances a city's employment and property tax base. An additional benefit of brownfields redevelopment is the reuse of existing infrastructure capacity.

2.24 Create a brownfields redevelopment group within the Planning and Economic Development Department. The brownfields redevelopment group will do the following:

- Prepare an inventory of brownfields sites. To assemble the inventory, the brownfields redevelopment group will use information in databases assembled by the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (PCA) and the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), as well as Sanborn maps describing how buildings and sites were used historically.
- Prepare a brownfields redevelopment strategic plan that includes a comprehensive approach to remediation and redevelopment of brownfields; the strategic plan will include, but not be limited to, applications for funding from local, state, and federal agencies, as well as tools for redevelopment and remediation using cost effective means, particularly leveraging development financing by the private sector.
- Provide developers and property owners, particularly those not aware of financial and programmatic assistance available for brownfields redevelopment, with information about state brownfields programs, including voluntary environmental investigation and remediation programs, the preparation of Response Action Plans (RAP) needed for cleanup, and loan programs.
- Assist developers with site acquisition, as appropriate.

2.25 Develop a brownfields fund to use in connection with the investigation and remediation of contaminated properties identified for redevelopment.

Investigation and remediation of brownfields involve extra costs not borne by other development activities. Brownfields Revolving Loan Fund Grants are available from EPA for citywide brownfields projects; they can be used to investigate contaminated property where no redevelopment project has yet been identified, once an inventory of contaminated properties is completed. Establishment of a City fund will encourage, expedite, and simplify the investigation process necessary for brownfields remediation and redevelopment. EPA's TAB program (Technical Assistance to Brownfields communities) assists communities in preparing applications for grant funding.

2.26 Seek funding for brownfields remediation from the tax base revitalization programs operated by the state Department of Employment and Economic Development (DEED) and the Metropolitan Council.

Both programs provide funding for remediation on sites where a project has been identified. The objective is recycling land so it is productive once again, specifically through the creation of jobs and enhancement of the tax base.

2.27 Pursue the establishment of a state tax credit program; tax credits can be used to encourage landowners to clean up brownfields so land can be redeveloped.

Tax credits will provide an incentive for landowners to clean up sites and seek reimbursement for those costs. Reimbursement made in the year incurred, rather than capitalized over time, will facilitate a more expedient cleanup of contaminated land.

2.28 Study and implement ways in which the City's land use controls can be used to facilitate and stimulate brownfields redevelopment.

Redevelopment of brownfields is often complex. Simplifying and providing flexibility in connection with zoning and other regulatory requirements may facilitate brownfields redevelopment.

2.29 Study state and federal brownfields assistance programs and comment on changes necessary for their improvement.

The Metropolitan Council, DEED, Ramsey County, and EPA have extensive brownfields remediation programs and funding for the investigation and remediation of brownfields. Changes are particularly needed in the amount of funding available for brownfields redevelopment.

2.30 Support and work closely with the DEED and the Metropolitan Council so their programs for brownfields remediation are efficient, effective, and utilized to the greatest extent possible.

Economic development

The crux of economic development is jobs. City government, however, has limited ability to influence the economy directly and, consequently, must be strategic in what it does to encourage and support economic development. The City, with its partners, has prepared an economic development strategy with six broad initiatives (See Introduction). The strategy is a two-year document that will be continuously updated as implementation of its programs proceeds.

2.31 Implement the City's Economic Development Strategy to focus resources effectively in a coordinated series of initiatives and programs intended to secure and retain industries and commerce, and the jobs both create.

2.32 Collaborate with the Port Authority on development related activities for industrial projects.

Strategy 3: Promote aesthetics and development standards

The built environment encompasses more than bricks-and-mortar development. Benchmarks for how the built environment is developed are necessary to produce a city that is accessible and livable.

Urban design

Design to achieve a pedestrian-scaled urban environment has long been a foundation of Saint Paul planning and development. This concept was an integral component of the Saint Paul on the Mississippi Development Framework and was later incorporated into the 1999 Land Use chapter of the Comprehensive Plan. The City in 2004 codified general design standards used during site plan review and design standards applicable to Traditional Neighborhood districts. Adoption of the Traditional Neighborhood districts and general design standards for other districts represents a paradigm shift from a city in which the built environment is shaped by the automobile to one that increasingly utilizes transit and accommodates the pedestrian. As the city evolves, an attractive and vital urban form becomes increasingly important to advance objectives of pedestrian-scaled environment.

3.1 Continue to utilize and improve the provisions and design standards for the Traditional Neighborhood (TN) districts and the citywide general design standards in Section 63.110 of the Zoning Code to achieve a high quality pedestrian-scaled urban environment; prepare a study of these sections of the Zoning Code and how they have been utilized since their adoption.

A study of the TN districts, including design standards, as well as the citywide general design standards, will focus on several issues, including, but not limited to, uses, Floor Area Ratio, parking lot location, signage, and the impact of LEED guidelines on TN projects.

3.2 Prepare design standards that provide a transition between single family houses and nearby taller buildings; issues include, but are not limited to, height, mass, scale, and architectural context. Taller buildings might be located in Neighborhood Centers or Corridors, at the edges where they abut single family neighborhoods.

3.3 Study the feasibility of using form-based codes to strengthen in the Zoning Code.

Form-based codes are development regulations that shape the urban environment by addressing the relationship between building facades and the public realm; the form and mass of buildings in relation to one another; and, the scale of streets and blocks. Form-based codes are used to implement a city's vision for a compact, pedestrian-scale design of the urban environment. Form-based codes are prescriptive – they state what a city wants – rather than proscriptive – what a city does not want, and do not focus on provisions typically found in conventional zoning codes, such as Floor Area Ratio, permitted land uses, setbacks, and lot coverage.

3.4 Prepare citywide infill housing design standards so that infill housing fits within the context of existing neighborhoods and is compatible with the prevailing pattern of development.

The City Council has directed the Department of Planning and Economic Development to study how new housing can be constructed and existing single family houses can be renovated and remodeled to be compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood. The standards will establish a baseline for development on vacant infill lots.

3.5 Collaborate with city-designated design centers citywide to further the integration of high quality design into city planning documents and development projects.

The City has worked with the Design Center of the Saint Paul Riverfront Corporation for several years. Planning for development in the Central Corridor anticipates the creation of a Design Review and Advisory Resource, which will be responsible for collaboration with property owners on preliminary redevelopment concepts and the review of development applications.

3.6 Encourage improvement of safety through design, as outlined in Design for Public Safety.

Design for Public Safety incorporates the principles of crime prevention through environmental design, which focus on strategies and techniques for the design of the physical environment, both of sites and buildings, which help reduce opportunities for crime. (Policy 1.7 in the Parks Chapter addresses safety through design issues.)

Development standards

The aesthetic elements of a development are as important as others, including, for example, density, height and scale. The following policies address those issues.

3.7 Work with developers during site plan review to utilize sections of the Zoning Code that make development compatible with the existing and planned character of a neighborhood or other area of the city; in particular, those sections on landscaping and plant materials (63.115), exterior lighting (63.116).

3.8 Enhance the city's physical and aesthetic environment by preventing the indiscriminate removal or destruction of trees, where practicable; and, by protecting to large trees and exceptional trees that are historic, ecological, or aesthetic. (The Parks chapter includes policies regarding the protection of trees.)

3.9 Consider ground and surface water in the preparation of a site for development and in the design and construction of buildings; the site and the buildings should be appropriately designed to protect water resources and emphasize natural features such as water bodies.

The intent of this policy is to integrate measures in the Water chapter with the Land Use chapter.

3.10 Encourage the financing and construction of private unstructured open spaces, particularly open play areas, in new multifamily developments.

Common outdoor areas in multifamily developments outside of downtown will fulfill two objectives: provide open space that can be used and enjoyed by residents of all ages and enhance the aesthetics of the development. Maintenance of common areas will be the responsibility of the development. These areas provide benefits to residents of one development similar to those provided to the entire community by amenities in the public realm.

3.11 Encourage the coordination of business signs to achieve greater consistency among business signs and signs of community interest and to reduce visual clutter.

Coordinated signage will enhance the city's appearance and potentially make retail shopping districts safer by reducing the distractions for motorists. Coordinated signage will be the focus of a zoning study of existing sign regulations and sign districts.

Open space and natural features

Parks and open space are urban amenities and part of the public realm that shapes urban development.

3.12 Preserve and support parks and open space as part of the natural eco-system and as critical elements in the public realm.

The Parks chapter focuses on the City's system of parks and recreation centers. This policy defines the role of the parks system as integral to the sustenance of neighborhoods in Saint Paul.

3.13 Integrate City plans and developments with the Metro Greenways program operated by the state Department of Natural Resources (DNR), where applicable, to protect, restore and manage natural areas connected by ecological corridors in the region.

Areas in Saint Paul identified by DNR for protection and restoration are Trout Brook and the Mississippi River shoreline.

Public art

Public art strengthens the public realm and enhances the city's identity. It promotes economic vitality and civic life. It advertises that Saint Paul is an attractive place to live, work, and visit.

3.14 Include public art policies in small area plans and other planning documents.

3.15 Support the development of guidelines to incorporate public art in City-financed capital projects and larger redevelopment efforts to imbue these projects with a distinct sense of place; provide for their maintenance. Projects include infrastructure, buildings, and landscape and exclude projects that are below ground. Involve artists early in the planning and design of capital projects.

3.16 Facilitate collaboration between artists and the community to identify opportunities for public art and to discuss civic issues that may inform the artist's work.

Views and visual beauty

Many features of the natural environment and the built environment enhance a sense of place as long as they remain prominently visible.

3.17 Preserve significant public views through standards that regulate such impacts as height, bulk, scale, view corridor (See Figure J). Include these standards in the site plan review process.

3.18 Support the protection and enhancement of the visibility of architectural landmarks.

Examples are the Capitol, the Cathedral of St. Paul, the Highland Park Water Tower, and Landmark Center.

Solar energy

The necessity to conserve on the use of fossil fuels and to take advantage of other energy sources has become, arguably, the defining issue during the 1990s and the first decade of the 21st Century.

3.19 Promote access to sunlight for solar energy systems in new or rehabilitated residential, commercial, and industrial developments to the extent possible. Prepare a study on tools, techniques, and regulations to facilitate increased usage of solar energy systems, either as standalone systems or as supplements to conventional energy sources, including, but not limited to:

- a. Orientation of buildings, lots, and streets to capture the maximum amount of sunlight;
- b. Building and site design, and the permissible levels of shading by structures and vegetation; and
- c. Determination of minimum degree of solar access protection needed to produce maximum amount of solar energy.

Implementation

The recommendations in the following planning and zoning studies will implement the concepts and policies in this plan:

1. RM multifamily districts and the TN districts. Issues are density and other development standards. (Policy 1.3)
2. New zoning districts to permit higher density residential and commercial development in the Central Corridor and other areas of the city that warrant more intense development. (Policy 1.4)
3. Accessory units in Established Neighborhoods. (Policy 1.6)
4. Commercial zoning districts citywide. The issue is the amount of commercial zoning best able to provide goods and services and to be integral part of a vibrant economy. (Policy 1.50)
5. Alleys in commercial areas abutting residential areas. The issue is how alleys can serve small scale industrial firms and commercial office buildings when those uses abut residential neighborhoods. (Policy 2. 6)
6. Class C office buildings in downtown. (Policy 2.13)
7. West Midway industrial area outside the Central Corridor line of change. The study will determine how the industrial area may be best used to strengthen Saint Paul's industrial sector and employment base. (Policy 2.16)
8. Conditional use permit for non-industrial uses in industrial districts. The issues are compatibility with the primary industrial function of the district and protection of the employment base. (Policy 2.21)
9. Principal uses permitted in industrial districts. The issue is land use categories that may negatively affect the availability of land for industrial activity or that may conflict with the character and function of industrial areas. (Policy 2.22)
10. Development standards for the I1, I2, and I3 districts. (Policy 2.23)
11. Land use controls to facilitate and stimulate brownfields redevelopment. (Policy 2.28)
12. Provisions and design standards in TN districts and the general design standards in Section 63.110 of the Zoning Code. The issue is pedestrian-scaled urban environment. (Policy 3.1)
13. Design standards to provide a transition between single family houses and nearby taller buildings. (Policy 3.2)
14. Form-based codes. (Policy 3.3)
15. Design standards for infill housing. (Policy 3.4)
16. Solar energy. Study of tools, techniques, and regulations to facilitate increased usage of solar energy systems. (Policy 3.19)

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